

St. Albans Cooperative Creamery, Inc.  
140 Federal Street  
St. Albans, Vermont 05478



VERMONT PUBLIC  
SERVICE BOARD

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Est. 1919

May 2, 2006

James Volz, Chairman  
Susan M. Hudson, Clerk  
Vermont Public Service Board  
Chittenden Bank Building, 4<sup>th</sup> floor  
112 State Street  
Post Office Drawer 20  
Montpelier, Vermont 05620-2701

Re: Efficiency Vermont

Dear Members:

We support the efforts of Efficiency Vermont. However, we are concerned with the energy efficiency utility's petition to increase the charge levied upon ratepayers to fund Efficiency Vermont.

We are opposed to increasing the program charge during these economic times when both consumers and businesses are experiencing financial challenges.

The St. Albans Cooperative Creamery, Inc. and its dairy farmer members are not in a position to incur any additional costs. Our members are already experiencing an increase in operating costs while the milk price is rapidly declining.

Today's milk prices reflect prices of over 20 years ago. For March 2006 our members' average income per farm was over \$6,000 less this year than for March 2005. Our farmers operations are already having difficulty cash flowing and this is not the time to transfer any additional burden of costs to support Efficiency Vermont.

St. Albans Cooperative returns all of its profits to its members. It is essential that we support our farms and return as much additional income as possible. In FY05, St. Albans Cooperative paid out over \$12,500 in energy efficiency charges that could have been distributed to our membership.

It is important that St. Albans Cooperative is competitive with other Cooperative's throughout the northeast. Our cost of doing business in this state is becoming a serious issue. Efficiency Vermont may want to focus some of its efforts on how we as a state can reduce our costs of power. Electrical rates are concerns for all businesses and residential customers in this state. Electricity is an essential resource needed to operate the Cooperatives day-to-day operations as well as for the operation of its member farms. Any further increase in operating costs combined with lower milk prices in 2006 will prove to be a major challenge for the Cooperative and its membership to overcome throughout the course of the next year.

Certified to ISO 9001-2000



We as a state need to review carefully how we fund programs of this type in the future. There is a limit of what you can ask our businesses, economic sector and residents to support.

St. Albans Cooperative does not support any increase in our funding of Efficiency Vermont.

Sincerely,



Leon J. Berthiaume  
General Manager